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ABSTRACT

A pilot program of teacher education was conceptualized in response to the increased diversity within the elementary classroom and a growing realization that evolving service delivery paradigms in the public schools suggest a need to examine how educators are being prepared for this environment. The College of Education and individual faculty members of the Teacher Education and Educational Leadership Departments of Saginaw Valley State University, Michigan have organized the Unified Elementary Pilot Program (UEPP) in conjunction with Bangor Central Elementary and the Bangor Township Schools. The program is "unified" in several ways: (1) the College of Education is "unified" with Bangor Township Schools in a partnership that permits and supports the pilot; (2) a unified instructional team consists of university teacher educators and classroom teachers; (3) methods courses are taught in integrated, semester-long blocks using thematic units; and (4) the knowledge/skills competencies unique to special education teacher preparation has been unified with course work and field experiences required throughout the elementary program. A cohort group of 25 students was selected from among those students admitted to the College of Education. The pilot program commenced during the Winter Semester 1995 and will be completed by the end of the Spring semester 1997. (A list of the competencies, skills, and knowledge needed to teach in the unified classroom; a list of variables and evaluation methods for the pilot program; and a list of program outcomes are attached.) (RS)

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UNIFIED ELEMENTARY PILOT PROGRAM

College of Education
Teacher Education Department
Saginaw Valley State University

1st Combined International Reading Association
Regional Conference (Great Lakes & Southeast)
Opryland Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee
November 14, 1995

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Education

Unified Elementary Pilot Program
Program Overview

The College of Education and individual faculty members of the Teacher Education and Educational Leadership Departments have organized the Unified Elementary Pilot Program (UEPP) in conjunction with Bangor Central Elementary and the Bangor Township Schools. The pilot was conceptualized in response to the increased diversity within the elementary classroom and a growing realization that evolving service delivery paradigms in the public schools suggest a need to examine at how we are preparing educators for this environment.

The program is "unified" in several ways:

1) The College of Education is "unified" with Bangor Township Schools in a partnership that permits and supports the pilot. This partnership developed from a long term relationship with Bangor Central Elementary (an inclusive education environment) where preservice students received clinical experience for individual methods courses. Most recently, the partnership was formalized into a Unified Community School providing support for all the students, families, faculty and staff by unifying our resources and working toward common goals. These goals include improved outcomes for the elementary students, curriculum development for K-5, preservice teacher education opportunities, professional development, and improved interagency service to children and families. Bangor Central Elementary (BCE) serves as the primary location for field experience in the preservice elementary pilot.

2) A "unified" instructional team for the pilot consists of SVSU faculty from the special education and elementary teacher education programs. In addition, general classroom and special education teachers from BCE also serve on the team. All course work, field supervision and advising is conducted by this team. They utilize and model coteaching, collaborative skills and team planning for the preservice participants of the pilot.

3) Subject methodology in the elementary preparation program has traditionally been taught in separate, distinct courses, sequenced over several semesters. This pilot program "unifies" these same methods courses into integrated semester-long instructional blocks and teaches around thematic units (see Course of Study). For example, during the initial semester, TE 301, Teaching Children's Literature, TE 318, Teaching the Language Arts, and TE 322, Teaching the Arts, were taught as a single 9 hour block, unifying the course objectives around themes. An instructional team of faculty from SVSU and BCE planned and implemented the instruction as a single unit over the 15 week semester. The corresponding field experiences for this "Arts" semester was supervised by the instructional team at BCE.

4) Finally, teacher preparation curricula designed uniquely for elementary classroom teachers and elementary special education teachers has been "unified" into a single course of study. Just as the objectives for individual methods courses are integrated into a single instructional block, the knowledge/skills/competencies unique to special education teacher preparation has been "unified" with the course work and field experiences required throughout the elementary program (see Competencies). As preservice teachers are learning methodology for teaching reading, language, math or science, they simultaneously develop their knowledge and skills related to learning styles, assessment, curriculum modification and adaptation, necessary for effective instruction in those subject areas and across a diverse group of children. The "special education" component of the preparation is a strand that runs throughout the course of study. Objectives and competencies are integrated within the semester's course block as are the Arts, Language Arts, or Children's Literature courses'. Special education faculty are full members of the instructional team, planning, coteaching and supervising students throughout the program.

A cohort group of 25 students was selected from among those students who applied and were admitted to the College of Education for Winter 1995. Participants met all of the requirements for full admission to the Teacher Education Program at SVSU. Additionally, students submitted a Statement of Interest in the UEPP and successfully completed an interview with the instructional team members from SVSU and BCE.

The pilot program commenced during the Winter Semester 1995 and will be completed by the end of Spring semester 1997. The course of study* includes:

I. **Language/Arts - W95 - 9 hours**
   - TE 301 Teaching Children's Literature
   - TE 318 Teaching Language Arts
   - TE 322 Teaching the Arts
   - TE 490a Special Needs: Language Arts

II. **Special Education Introduction - S95 - 3 hours**
   - TE 430 Educating Exceptional Learners

III. **Social Studies/Reading Content - F95 - 7 hours**
   - TE 341 Teaching Social Studies
   - TE 310 Methods of Teaching Reading-Content
   - TE 490b Special Needs: Content Reading

VI. **Math/Science - W96 - 9 hours**
   - TE 330 Methods of Teaching Science
   - TE 331 Methods of Teaching Math
   - TE 490c Special Needs: Math & Science

V. **Physical Education - S96 - 3 hours**
   - TE 325 Physical Education Methods

VI. **Reading/Classroom Management - F96 - 8 hours**
   - TE 310b Methods of Teaching Reading-Instruction.
   - TE 516 Classroom Management Techniques
   - TE 490d Special Needs: Reading

VII. **Student Teaching - W97 - 20 hours****
   - TE 410 Elementary Seminar
   - TE 420 Student Teaching Elementary
   - TE 440 Special Education Seminar
   - TE 460 Student Teaching Special Education

(All students are required to take Psy 310, Psy 317, & EDL 300 = 10 hours)

Those students participating in this program will be prepared to orchestrate an integrated curriculum in a totally integrated setting. They will learn the skills needed to organize and apply all of the available resources and strategies for the benefit of all the children in the classroom. The training focuses on the individual needs of students by combining the most effective aspects of both general and special education practices in a very unique setting, an inclusive elementary school. While the pilot is clearly intended for those who wish to teach in the elementary classroom, students successfully completing the program will develop skills in both elementary and special education.

* **UEPP** = Standard Course of Study-Elementary + TE 430 + TE 490(a-d) + TE 516 = **69 hours**
Traditionally = Standard Course of Study-Elementary + LD endorsement = **88 hours**

** Student teaching will occur from 1/97 to 5/97 or 20 weeks. Student will serve as the classroom teacher for 10 weeks and then serve as the special education teacher for 10 weeks in an inclusive classroom.

SAGINAW VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Education

Unified Elementary Pilot Program

Competencies, Skills and Knowledge Needed to Teach in the Unified Classroom

I. Theoretical Foundations
- A. human growth and development, both typical and atypical, including affective, language, cognitive, and sensorimotor areas.
- B. factors influencing development, including physiological, social, cultural, physical environment, and psychological.
- C. learning and teaching theory.
- D. standardized and nonstandardized assessment procedures.
- E. exceptionalities and their educational implications.

II. Curriculum and Instruction
- A. an understanding of and an ability to implement effective curriculum design and instructional strategies.
- B. select, modify and adapt curriculum content and strategies to support pupils with diverse needs.
  1. the ability to use task and error analysis to determine the appropriate revision of instruction.
- C. the ability to develop lesson plans and adapt materials and methods for diverse needs.
- D. the ability to select media and technology appropriate to instructional goals and objectives.
- E. knowledge and application of principles of instructional effectiveness such as:
  1. maintaining communicating high and appropriate expectations for all students.
  2. maximizing time on task
  3. providing opportunities for success during all stages of learning (acquisition, proficiency, maintenance, and generalization.
  4. providing opportunities for frequent response, appropriate practice and corrective feedback.
  5. teaching generalization and transfer of skills.
  6. assisting in the development of learning strategies.
  7. teaching and modeling problem solving.
  8. teaching and modeling critical thinking.
  9. utilizing research based practices for effective instruction.

III. Classroom Management and the Learning Environment
- A. the ability to develop and implement individual and group behavior management procedures including:
  1. modifications for inappropriate behaviors.
  2. inclusion of parents in behavioral programs.
  3. strategies for crisis prevention intervention.
  4. strategies to increase appropriate behaviors and decrease inappropriate behaviors.
- B. the effective use of resources in creating a positive learning environment by:
  1. designating areas for specific activities.
  2. establishing classroom rules and procedures.
  3. evaluating how physical arrangements support instruction.
  4. managing simultaneous curriculum activities.
  5. appropriately using small and large group activities.
  6. developing a plan to involve parents, aides, and other professionals in the instructional process.
- C. an ability to apply effective instructional techniques as a proactive strategy for comprehensive classroom management such as:
  1. maximizing on-task behavior.
  2. providing appropriate motivation for learning.
- D. competency in the processes needed to develop positive teacher-student and student-student interpersonal relationships through the:

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1. knowledge of cultural, social, and affective characteristics that affect relationships.
2. modeling of positive behavior appropriate to the circumstances.
3. modeling effective nonverbal and other communication skills including speaking, writing and listening skills.
4. creation of an environment that increases student self-awareness, self-control, self-reliance.

VI. Evaluation and Measurement

A. the ability to use appropriate assessment techniques to gather, interpret and implement instruction.
B. the ability to use assessment data to establish goals and objectives appropriate for an individual student.
C. the ability to use a variety of collection systems to gather data that will allow analysis of the effectiveness of instruction which will include:
   1. systematic observation
   2. standardized tests
   3. informal assessment
   4. portfolio assessment
   5. curriculum-based assessment
D. the ability to translate the results of a comprehensive evaluation into an individual education plan.
E. the ability to determine student instructional and developmental needs through the use of curriculum-based assessment.
F. the ability to develop alternative types of assessment such portfolio assessment.

V. Communication, Collaboration and Consultation

A. an understanding of the roles professionals and parents play in a collaborative relationship for instruction and other services.
B. an understanding and an ability to evaluate the roles of families in helping students with special needs meet their instructional and socioemotional goals.
C. knowledge of the availability of interagency collaboration to support student and family goals.
D. knowledge of the principles related to collaborative relationships with colleagues that includes:
   1. problem solving skills used to develop instructional and management procedures.
   2. communicating program needs and outcomes.
   3. organizational skills.
   4. flexibility in planning and teaching.
   5. conflict resolution skills.
   6. participating in and contributing to multidisciplinary team activities.
E. knowledge to collaborate with parents in planning and implementing instructional programs. This may include:
   1. modeling consultation and communication skills used in conferences.
   2. developing a plan, with all professionals and parents, for the implementation of instructional and management goals and objectives.
   3. Encouraging, assisting parents to become active participants on the instruction team.
F. knowledge of general planning, management and communication skills to utilize paraprofessionals and volunteers in an instructional program.

VI. Instructional Systems

A. knowledge of program delivery systems, including all levels of service.
B. an understanding of the roles and organizational structures of education (general and special) and the part they play in the providing service for the student.
C. knowledge of the organizational, historical and legal factors related instructional systems such as:
   1. federal and state laws and regulations.
   2. due process and data privacy requirements.
   3. historical and philosophical background of the education of and attitudes toward students with special needs.
D. knowledge of institutional and administrative factors which facilitate the delivery of services.
E. understanding of how to identify and access interagency resources relevant to instruction and management

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UNIFIED ELEMENTARY PILOT PROGRAM: EVALUATION

Variables	Evaluation Method
I. Theoretical	
A. Human Development	A. examination, lesson planning
II. Curriculum & Instruction	
B. select, modify, adapt curriculum and strategies	B. lesson plans, field and student teaching
1. task analysis	
C. adapt materials and methods	C. lesson plans, field evaluation, student teaching
E. application of effective instruction	E. field evaluation
6. learning strategies	
III. Classroom Management & the Learning Environment	
A. individual and group behavior management	A. field evaluation, observation lesson plans, student teaching
1. modifications for inappropriate behavior	
2. inclusion of parents in behavioral programs	
B. use of resources to create a positive environment	B. observation, field and student teaching
4. managing simultaneous activities	
6. planning to involve parents, aides, other professionals in instruction	
C. effective instruction as proactive management	C. lesson plans, observation and evaluation of field and student teaching
D. developing positive relationships	D. observation
1. knowledge of characteristics that affect relationships	
4. increasing student self- awareness, control, and reliance	
IV. Evaluation and Measurement	
A. using assessment for instruction	A. lesson plans, field and student teaching evaluation
B. using assessment for setting goals/objectives	B. lesson plans, IEPs
C. using a variety of collection systems	C. observation, lesson plans, field evaluation, student teaching
D. translation of comprehensive evaluation into IEP	D. observation, IEP
E. determine needs through curriculum-based assessment	E. lesson plans, observation field/student teaching evaluation
V. Communication, Collaboration & Consultation	
A. understanding roles in a collaborative relationship	A. examination, observation
B. evaluating roles of the family	B. examination, observation
C. knowledge of interagency collaboration	C. examination, observation
D. Knowledge of the principals of collaborative relationships	D. examination, observation, field/student teaching
1. problem solving	
2. communicating needs	
3. flexibility	

4. conflict resolution 5. multidisciplinary team functions	
E. collaboration with parents 1. modeling skills in conferences 2. developing a plan for implementing goals and objectives with all parties 3. assisting parent in becoming participants	E. student teaching evaluation
VI. Instructional Systems	
A. program delivery systems	A. examination, observation
B. organizational structure and it role in service delivery	B. examination, observation and planning
C. knowledge of historical, legal etc. factors	C. examination, observation
D. institutional and administrative factors	D. examination, observation
E. identify and access interagency resources	E. observation, planning, field student teaching evaluation.

Time Table for Evaluation of Competencies

The evaluation of the competencies listed above will be conducted in both a formative and summative manner. As competencies are introduced to students throughout the course of study, their knowledge and ability will be measured as instructional objectives for their course work. Additionally, the presence of those new skills will be continually evaluated as they gain experience. Finally, the evaluation of their final clinical experience (20 weeks) will encompass the entire set of competencies - the skills, knowledge and attitudes to meet the diverse academic and developmental needs in the elementary classroom. The following chart provides the entire two year course of study by semester and year, with the corresponding courses and the introduction of the variables. As the variables are sequential, each one will be examined in each of the semesters following their introduction.

Course of Study	Course	Variables
Winter 1995	TE 301 TE 318 TE 322 TE 490a	IA; IIB(1), IIIB(4), C IVA,B,C,E VA
Summer 1995	TE 430	IA; IIID(1) IVD; VB,E(1-3) VIA-D
Fall 1995	TE 341 TE 310a TE 490b	IIC,E; VC; VIE
Winter 1996	TE 330 TE 331 TE 490c	VD + development previous competencies
Summer 1996	TE 325	
Fall 1996	TE 310b TE 516 TE 490d	VE(1-3)
Winter 1997	TE 440/60 TE 410/420	all variables examined

Program Outcomes

Elementary Program
(NCATE)

Special Education
(Mich OSE)

Students are required to demonstrate knowledge and skills in:

Learning Theory(310,331,300)
Goals & Objectives(all courses)
Cultural Influences(341,300,420)
Curriculum Planning(all but 301,310,341,300)
Instructional Technique(all but 300)
Planning/Management of Instruction(all)
Evaluation & Measurement(310, 331, 420)
Classroom Management(325,341,420)
Exceptionalities(301,420)
Social Systems & Schools(300,420)
School Law(300,420)
Instructional Technology(331,420)
Collabor/Consult.(318,322,330,331,420)
Time Management(325,331,420)
Communication(all but 325)
Learning Styles(322,331,300,420)
Teaching Strategies(301,310,322,325,330,300,420)
Assessment Techniques(310,331,300,420)

Theoretical Foundations
- **human development**(psy 310)
- **learning theory**(310,331,300)
- **assessment**(490A,516)
- **exceptionalities**(430)

Curriculum
- **design and instruction**(490B)
- adaptation(490A)

SPED Instructional Systems
- service delivery(430)
- **group management**(516)
- use of resources(516)
- program evaluation(490C)
- **team planning**(430,490C)
- adaptive technology(490C)

Communication/Consultation(490C)

Organization/Historical
- **legal**(430)

Observation and Analysis(490B,516)

IEP Design(430)
- nonschool resources(430)
- prevoc/vocational(430)
- behavior management(516)

LD Knowledges & Skills
- learning problems(430)
- remedial technique(490B)
- perceptual skills(490B)
- environmental design(516)
- teaching self-management(516)

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